

Be Alert and in the Moment  
By Councillor Lorelei Nicoll

The issue of crosswalk safety continues to be a major concern and it seems every day brings news of another vehicle pedestrian accident. These incidents highlight the dangers of driver distraction. Distracted driving can occur any time your attention is taken away from the task of driving. One study showed that nearly 80% of crashes and 65% of near crashes involve some form of driver inattention within 3 seconds before a crash. Driver distraction is estimated to be a contributing factor in 8 out of 10 crashes reported to Police.

Being distracted causes drivers to react more slowly to traffic conditions and fail more often to notice or recognize potential hazards, including pedestrians, bicycles or debris on the road. When drivers allow distractions to take their focus away from driving they decrease their margin of safety and are more likely to take risks even without knowing it. It is the responsibility of every person on the road to use caution, obey traffic controls and think safe. Drivers and pedestrians share the responsibility of crosswalk safety.

Last year HRM launched Distraction Kills, a campaign to bring awareness to drivers and pedestrians about the importance of being cautious, focused and attentive when driving and crossing the street. Texting, chatting, surfing the internet and listening to music on mobile devices are just some of the distractions for both pedestrians and drivers that lead to inattention. The goal of the campaign was to raise awareness about the dangers of distraction in an effort to change the way people think and act, both when behind the wheel or on foot, and when approaching a crosswalk.

On March 4<sup>th</sup>, Regional Council approved a report submitted by the HRM Crosswalk Safety Advisory Committee which made several recommendations including ongoing education, stiffer penalties and more visible crosswalks. These implementations will certainly assist in addressing safety concerns but ultimately crossing the street is a shared responsibility. Drivers and pedestrians both have a role to play in crosswalk safety.

#### RCMP Community Consultations/Town Hall

Halifax District RCMP will be holding Community Consultations throughout HRM over the next month. The RCMP Community Consultation for the communities of Lake Loon, Cherrybrook, North Preston and East Preston will be held at the East Preston Recreation Centre on March 25th from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. The meeting for the Cole Harbour area will be held at Cole Harbour Place on March 31st from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. We hope to see you there!

Councillor Lorelei Nicoll  
District 4 Cole Harbour - Westphal  
Phone: 478-2705  
E-mail: [lolelei.nicoll@halifax.ca](mailto:lolelei.nicoll@halifax.ca)  
[www.engagingcoleharbour.ca](http://www.engagingcoleharbour.ca)  
Facebook: Lorelei Nicoll – District 4  
Follow me on Twitter @loleleinicoll

